



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XVIII, ISSUE 3

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

March 2003

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By E. Veronica Pace

This month we salute the mature workforce, a legion of men and women, at least 55 years of age, who bring experience, dependability and a strong work ethic to the workplace. Seniors are everywhere doing everything. The D.C. Office on Aging is a one-stop center for assistance with job readiness, training and placement.

Our Older Workers Employment and Training Program assists persons who wish to seek employment with finding jobs suited for the older worker. We have several programs ideal to fit applicants with various qualifications. Look inside this issue for more information about these programs.

Have you completed your District and federal tax return for 2002? The deadline is approaching, and inside this issue, you will find tax help sites provided by AARP. The service is free to persons with middle or low income.

To help you remain safe this spring, please review the fire safety tips provided by Fire Chief Thompson. Many of us do spring cleaning and forget about fire safety. Follow these important steps and "spring into fire safety!"

## Older Workers Employment and Training Program

The D.C. Office on Aging Older Workers Employment and Training Program (OWETP) provides employment and training opportunities for District of Columbia residents 55 years of age and older. The office has operated the employment program to help seniors in need of additional income.

The primary goal of the OWETP is to increase employment opportunities for District residents 55 years of age and older by matching employers' labor needs with seniors' job skills. These services are provided free of charge.

### SeniorWorks II

SeniorWorks II is a structured internship program for District seniors seeking short-term volunteer opportunities and assignments working in public and private agencies, sponsored by the D.C. Office on Aging. Part-time volunteer internship assignments are generally limited to three months or less, with a small stipend provided to defray the intern/volunteer's travel and other workplace expenses.

### Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (Older Workers Employment and Training Program)

The WIA program is funded with a grant from the Department of Employment Services. The program provides employment and training opportunities for District residents 55 years of age and older.

Services are provided under Title I of the Act, and emphasize the development of employment and training opportunities through job search assistance workshops, on-the-job training, job development, and placement and classroom skills training. The Office is an active one-stop partner in the District of Columbia Workforce initiative.

### McMasters Program

The McMasters program, sponsored in partnership with McDonald's Corporation, helps older workers adjust to the work-a-day world. Its goals are to build an individual's confidence and self-esteem and to provide a job opportunity that fits into his/her lifestyle and personal schedule.

If you are 55 years of age or older and looking for employment or a volunteer opportunity, call the office at 202-724-3662.



## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MEETINGS

Mayor Anthony A. Williams presents neighborhood meetings to help residents learn about preparing for emergencies. For more information, call the Office of Community Outreach at 202-442-8150.

**March 10, 7 to 9 p.m.**

River Terrace School, 34th & Dix Streets, N.E.

**March 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

St. Georges Episcopal Church, 160 U Street, N.W.

**March 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

Emergency Management Agency, 2000 14th Street, NW – 8th Floor



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS, MAYOR

## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

## Duo Tackles the DMV

Charlie's Angels — as they are affectionately known at the Office on Aging — were assigned to help the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) with their backlog. Along with several other seniors, they did that and much more.

Joyclyn Mercer and Shirley Brown are two friends who are hard working women that know how to get things done. "We are problem solvers," said Brown.

Initially they were assigned to the DMV for three months as part of the Senior Works Internship. Senior Works is a program of the D.C. Office on Aging Older Workers Employment and Training Program, administered by Family and Child Services of Washington, D.C., Inc. The three-month internship ended up becoming six months. The seniors received a stipend and worked for four hours a day.

Mercer and Brown were brought on board to help with the wait time by greeting customers, answering phones and opening and sorting mail. These and other tasks allowed personnel to perform other tasks to serve the residents more efficiently.

"We pushed to get those titles out," said Mercer, 68. She added that they would bring the group barrels of documents to be processed.

"We worked as a team," Brown, 62, added. "You have to work together to make sure the work gets done."

Mercer, married for 36 years and the mother of one, retired from the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) after 34 years of government service to be a caregiver for her father. After his death five years later, she "needed to get out of the house."

Last March, Mercer went to an Office on Aging-sponsored job fair, where she met Executive Director E. Veronica Pace. Pace asked Mercer to consider the Senior Works program to "get her foot in the door."

Brown, who retired from the George Washington Health Plan as a nurse, has strayed away from nursing twice but always came back. While she was working for a doctor in the beginning of her career, one of his patients

While at the DMV, Mercer overheard an exchange an employee was having with an irritated resident. She decided to listen and observe. The employee remained calm while the resident did not. Later she was able to defend the actions of the employee to the supervisor.

"They are saying things that aren't even the truth," Mercer exclaimed. "On a whole, the employees are very helpful and polite."

One thing at the DMV that bothered the two was the employee restroom. "It was filthy," remarked Mercer. Brown asked a supervisor, "Would you want your mother to use this bathroom?"

So Mercer went to the store and bought some cleaning solution and sprinkled it on the floor while the cleaning lady was there. She encouraged her to dump her water and opt for clean water to finish the floor.

Brown plastered and wallpapered the walls from the ceiling to the tile. Mercer applied borders to the stalls. They created signs with poems and words of encouragement to post on the walls. A flower arrangement in a vase was also placed in the bathroom to assist in the transformation.

Everyone complimented them on their efforts and appreciated their hard work. They are quick to tell you that all of this was done during their "down time" and after their work was complete.

These two set out to make a difference at the DMV and were very successful in their efforts. They have certainly left huge shoes to fill for the next group. The Angels are awaiting their next assignment.



Joyclyn Mercer (left) and Shirley Brown pitched in at the DMV as Senior Works interns.

was an owner at Giant Foods. He told her that he needed someone with her personality at Giant. She took him up on the offer and worked for them for five years in their administrative offices.

Brown, a divorcee with two children and four grandchildren, knew about the Office on Aging because many years ago she helped the agency distribute "Spotlight on Aging." She maintained contact with the staff and they told her about the employment program.

One thing that both Mercer and Brown agreed on was that they wanted to make a difference at the DMV. After hearing of the troubles there, they requested to be placed at the DMV.

## Learning on the Job

After his trucking business failed, Antonio Jimmy, 72, came to the Office on Aging to get assistance finding a job.

The Office on Aging has a partnership with Safeway for On-the-Job Training for seniors, and in 1992 Jimmy received on-the-job training and was hired as a Safeway courtesy clerk. He later applied for a job in the seafood department. After training, he worked successfully in that department for many years.

Jimmy received the "Superior Service Award" on three occasions. He is a hard worker and enjoys his work. He recently was transferred to the deli department.

Along with his duties at Safeway, Jimmy cares for his wife, who has developed problems with her memory. The couple has been married for 49 years, and they have three children and

three grandchildren. A native of Puerto Rico, Jimmy brought his family to Washington after a visit to the United States.

"I came on vacation and I loved Washington," he said. He added that he went back to Puerto Rico and resigned from the job he held for 17 years since high school.

After working for a few years for two trucking companies, Jimmy received a small business loan and started his own trucking and export company. But delinquent taxes caused him to close his business after 20 years.

He said he was glad to have worked at Safeway for more than a decade.

"I am very happy that the Office on Aging was able to help me find a job," Jimmy said.



Antonio Jimmy found work at Safeway.

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Free Tax Help Available

AARP Tax-Aide is a free service that prepares tax returns (including electronic filing) and answers tax questions. Available to persons of low to middle income, volunteers are IRS-trained and certified. This service has been available through AARP since 1968.

The following is a list of sites located in the District. For more information, call 1-888-227-7669.

- Anacostia Library**  
1800 Good Hope Rd., S.E.  
Thursdays, 1 to 5 p.m.  
No appointment required  
E-filing available
- Benning Library**  
3935 Benning Rd., N.W.  
Mondays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required  
E-filing available
- Chevy Chase Community Center**  
5601 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Wednesdays, 1 to 5 p.m.  
Appointment required for e-filing  
Call 202-966-8603
- Cleveland Park Library**  
3310 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Mondays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Columbia Senior Center**  
1250 Taylor St., N.W.  
Mondays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Fort Stevens Senior Recreation**  
1327 Van Buren St., N.W.  
Fridays, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
No appointment required

- Goodwill Industries**  
2200 S. Dakota Ave., N.E.  
Mondays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Appointment required  
Call Judy Sklar at 202-636-4225, ext. 1257
- Guy Mason Recreation Center**  
3600 Calvert St., N.W.  
Mondays and Wednesdays,  
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Iona Senior Services**  
4125 Albemarle St., N.W.  
Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Appointment required  
Call 202-895-9425  
E-filing available
- Lamond Riggs Library**  
5401 S. Dakota Ave., N.E.  
Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
No appointment required  
E-filing available
- Mount Horah Baptist Church**  
2914 Bladensburg Rd., N.E.  
Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Mount Pleasant Library**  
16th and Lamont Streets, N.W.  
Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required  
Spanish-speaking aides available
- Nativity Catholic Church**  
6000 Georgia Ave., N.W.  
Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
Appointment required  
Call 202-726-7533

- Palisades Library**  
4901 V St., N.W.  
First Wednesday of the month 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Appointment required
- Petworth Library**  
4200 Kansas Ave., N.W.  
Mondays and Thursdays 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Southwest Library — Waterside**  
920 Wesley Place, S.W.  
Mondays and Wednesdays 6 to 8:30 p.m.,  
Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Takoma Park Library**  
416 Cedar St., N.W.  
Tuesdays, 1 to 5 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Tenley-Friendship Library**  
4450 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.  
Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required
- United Planning Organization**  
301 Rhode Island Ave., N.W.  
Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
No appointment required  
Call 202-238-4600 for more information.
- Watha T. Daniel Library**  
1725 8th St., N.W.  
Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required
- West End Library**  
1101 24th St., N.W.  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 to 5 p.m.  
No appointment required
- Woodridge Regional Library**  
1800 Hamlin St., N.E.  
Fridays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
No appointment required  
E-filing available

Spring Into Fire Safety!

As the spring season approaches, the D.C. Fire and EMS Department encourage you to begin “Fire Safety Spring Cleaning” in your home by attending to the following:

- Develop a fire and emergency escape plan and practice it. Having an escape plan is an extremely important part of your safety when a fire starts.
- Make sure you clean and check your smoke detectors. The D.C. Fire and EMS Department offers free smoke detectors to homeowners in the District. If you are in need of a smoke detector, contact the Office of the Fire Marshal at 202-727-1614.
- We use electricity so often that we seldom think about the dan-

gers. Take time this season to have a certified electrician check all of your outlets, cords that may be frayed, and the working condition of appliances, such as air conditioners, toasters, fans, etc.

- In the event of an emergency, it is important that fire and EMS personnel are able to see your address. As trees and shrubbery start to bloom this season, cut back any growth obstructing visibility of your house number.
- Matches and lighters are very useful tools for adults, but very dangerous for children. Please keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.

—Fire Chief Adrian Thompson

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

*Spotlight On Aging is published by the Information Office of the D.C. Office on Aging for D.C. senior residents.*

*Advertising contained in the Senior Beacon is not endorsed by the D.C. Office on Aging or by the publisher.*

441 4th St., N.W., 9th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
202-724-5622  
www.dcoa.dc.gov

E. Veronica Pace, Executive Director  
Darlene Nowlin, Editor

## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

# Community Calendar

## March events

### Senior Recruitment

The Greater Washington Urban League is recruiting seniors to visit and participate in our activities at nutrition centers in Wards 2 and 5. Services provided include: case management, recreation and socialization, health promotion, nutrition, and education or nutrition counseling. For more information, contact Brenda L. Turner, Director, Aging Services or Evelyn Minor, Nutrition Health Services Coordinator at 202-529-8701.

### 3rd • Call for details

Join Columbia Senior Center on a trip to Midway in Harrington, Del. Donation is \$8. Transportation will be provided from Columbia Senior Center, 1250 Taylor St., N.W. For more information, contact Monica Carroll at 202-328-3270, ext. 11.

### 6th • 8 a.m.

Go on a movie, lunch, and shopping spree at Springfield Mall with UPO - Project Keen. The movie and lunch are complimentary; the bus fee is \$6. The bus will leave from Randall Nutrition Center at 1002 46th St., N.E. For movie information and further details, call Project Keen at 202-388-4280.

### 7th • 10:30 a.m.

Travel to a fun dollar store where your dollar buys more. After shopping, enjoy lunch on your own at Horn & Horn Restaurant. Transportation is free. The bus will leave from the Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service center, 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E. For more information, call 202-678-2800.

### 10th • 1 p.m.

Join Columbia Senior Center for a fall prevention workshop, sponsored by the George Washington University Hospital Outpatient Physical Rehabilitation Services. This workshop will present ways to prevent falls and stay active longer. Lecture will be held at the center, 1250 Taylor St., N.W. For more information, call 202-328-3270.

### 12th • due date

Columbia Senior Center will be attending the matinee performance of the Alvin Ailey Dancers at the Kennedy Center on April 19th. \$45 (orchestra seating) must be paid in full by March 12th. Call Monica Carroll for further information, 202-328-3277.

### 13th • 1 p.m.

Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service celebrates State Day. Learn more about the great state of California this month with trivia games, music and more. Light refreshments will be served. The center is located at 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E., 202-678-2800.

### 17th • 1 p.m.

Model Cities Senior Wellness Center will host a workshop called "Legal Counseling for the Elderly" at 1901 Evarts Street, N.E. For more information, contact Tisha Tucker at 202-635-1900.

### 19th • due date

Columbia Senior Center will be attending the Evangel Cathedral Easter Production on Friday, April 18th at 7:30 p.m. To attend this event, the donation of \$25 must be paid by March 19th. For details, please call Monica Carroll at 202-328-3270, ext. 11.

### 19th • due date

Christian Dance Academy presents, "Abundant Life" on Thursday, March 20th at 10:30 a.m. at the Hallan Theatre, PG Community College. The donation of \$6 must be paid to Columbia Senior Center by the 19th of March. To reserve your seat, call Monica Carroll at 202-328-3270, ext. 11.

### 19th • 1 p.m.

Learn self defense techniques and how to protect yourself at home and in the community from Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service center. Class will be given at 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E. Call 202-678-2800 for further information.

### 20th • 10 a.m. to noon

United Planning Organization, Project Keen Comprehensive Senior Program presents "Hoopster" exercise and fitness program. Take your best shot at the 5th Annual Senior Shoot Out. Win 5 cents for each basket you make. Prizes, entertainment and refreshments will be offered for free. This event will take place at the Fort Davis Gymnasium, 4100 41st St., S.E. For more information, call Project Keen at 202-388-4280.

### 21st • 10 a.m.

Columbia Senior Center will host a health fair featuring health screenings, fitness demonstrations, healthy snacks and more. The fair is co-sponsored by Chi Eta Phi Sorority Inc., a national sorority of African-American professional nurses and nursing students. For more information, call Columbia Senior Center at 202-328-3270.

### 25th • 10 a.m.

Travel to the Round House Theatre for a staged reading of "Conversations" by the HeyDay Players. Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service will provide transportation and entrance to the theatre is free. Pre-registration is required, so call 202-678-2800. The bus leaves from the center located at 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E.

### 26th • 11 a.m.

Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service will offer free glaucoma screenings. Call 202-678-

2800 to register. Screenings will be done at 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E.

### 28th • 11 a.m.

Columbia Senior Center will host a presentation on basic nutrition. Guest speakers will be from the Washington Hospital Center. The lecture will be held at 1250 Taylor Street, N.W. For details, call 202-328-3277.

## April event

### April 10th • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mammogram screenings will be given at the Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Service center, 2451 Good Hope Rd., S.E. The George Washington University's Mammovan will be performing free mammogram screening for women who show proof of accepted insurance. Women who don't qualify may pay for screening out of pocket. For more information and to register, call 202-678-2800.

## Ongoing

### Second Monday of each month • 10:30 a.m. to noon

The Stroke Support Group meets at IONA Senior Center, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W., to share experiences with others coping with the long-term effects of stroke. Caregivers are welcome and encouraged to come. The facilitator is Christine Jackson. Registration is required, and donations are accepted. To register, call 202-895-9455 or e-mail: cjackson@iona.org for details.

### Thursdays • 10 to 11:30 a.m.

The Low-Vision Support Group meets at IONA Senior Center, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. It focuses on emotional aspects of coping with vision loss. No fee, but donations are accepted. The facilitators are Carlene Costello and Elly Waters. Registration is required. Call 202-895-9445 or e-mail: Ccostello@iona.org.

### Thursdays • 10:30 a.m. to noon

IONA Caregivers Support Group is open to all individuals providing primary care to a loved one suffering from chronic illness. No fee, but donations are accepted. The group will meet at IONA Senior Center, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. The facilitators are Betsy Mathiasen and Margaret Johannsen. Call to register: 301-299-9022 or 202-332-9585.

### Fridays • 11 a.m. to noon

Parkinson's Support Group. Seniors with Parkinson's Disease meet at IONA Senior Center with this on-going group to share the concerns, challenges, changes and losses associated with this chronic illness. Registration is required. Call Deb Rubenstein at 202-895-0249 or e-mail: drubenst@iona.org.

# New Parking Fines Go Into Effect March 1

The District will raise fines for six parking violations, effective Saturday, March 1. Fines have remained constant for the last decade, falling behind those of neighboring jurisdictions and losing much of their deterrent effect.

The fines for four parking violations will increase from \$20 to \$30: No Parking Anytime; No Parking/Public Alley; Disobeying Official Sign (street cleaning, etc.), and Parking Beyond Posted Limit in

a residential area. The fine for an expired meter will increase from \$15 to \$25.

The largest change will affect commercial vehicles, such as tour buses. The fine for parking a bus, commercial or sightseeing vehicle in front of a residence or other restricted space will increase from \$20 to \$500.

More than 20 agencies are authorized to write parking tickets on behalf of the District Govern-

ment, including the U.S. Capitol Police, the U.S. Park Police, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Police, D.C. Department of Public Works, Metropolitan Police Department, and the U.S. Mint.

The increases were passed by the City Council last summer as part of the Fiscal Year 2003 Budget Support Emergency Act of 2002 and published in the District of Columbia Register on August 23, 2002.